

Message Text

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ACTION CU-04

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1758
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL PALERMO
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USIA WASHDC

UNCLAS ROME 20289

SECSTATE FOR CU/ARTS; USIA FOR ICS; NAPLES FOR BNC

Q.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SCUL, IT.
SUBJECT: COMING TOGETHER FESTIVAL OF DANCE AND MUSIC

1. COMING TOGETHER FESTIVAL ENTHUSIASTICALLY RECEIVED IN NAPLES AND CATANIA. ALTHOUGH PALERMO CONCERT CANCELLED THREE HOURS BEFORE OPENING UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND USIS CONTROL, PALERMO CONGEN GRACIOUSLY OPENED HIS HOME TO FESTIVAL, WHO PERFORMED SUCCESSFULLY FOR SMALL AUDIENCE, INCLUDING MUSIC CRITICS.

2. NOVEMBER 23 CONCERT AT NAPLES BNC CALLED "RESOUNDING SUCCESS" BY BNC DIRECTOR. AUDITORIUM FILLED TO OVERFLOWING; SRO AUDIENCE OF 150 ALSO STOOD IN ADJOINING FOYER TO HEAR PERFORMANCE. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION WARM AND ENTHUSIASTIC; BNC CALLED VANAVER AND DRAPKIN "A GIFTED TEAM WHOSE PERFORMANCE WAS SUPERB. BILL VANAVER'S ABILITY TO DRAW THE AUDIENCE INTO THE ACTION IS NOTHING SHORT OF GENIUS. THIRTY OR FORTY PERSONS OCCUPIED THE DUO WITH QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS AFTER THE PERFORMANCE, LONG INTO THE EVENING. THEY WERE WITHOUT QUESTION AMONG THE BEST THINGS USIS HAS SPONSORED HERE".

3. NOVEMBER 25 CONCERT IN PALERMO SUDDENLY CANCELLED BY PALERMO ARCHBISHOP THREE HOURS BEFORE PERFORMANCE, ARCHBISHOP HAD SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT ALLOWING A GROUP WITH "DANCE" IN THE
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TITLE TO PERFORM IN A CHURCH-OWNED PERFORMING HALL. CONCERT

CANCELLED WITHOUT PRIOR NOTIFICATION. PALERMO PRESS CLEARLY NOTED THAT DISPUTE IN NO WAY INVOLVED USIS, BUT RATHER ARCH-BISHOP'S OFFICE AND LOCAL SPONSOR, AMICI DELLA MUSICA.

4. MORE THAN 350 SPECTATORS CROWDED INTO THE 300-SEAT AUDITORIUM OF PALAZZO BISCARI IN CATANIA FOR THE FESTIVAL'S NOVEMBER 2, CONCERT. THE DUO SUCCEEDED IN CAPTIVATING THE ENTIRE AUDIENCE, COMPOSED MOSTLY OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS. THE CATANIA PROGRAM, ORGANIZED BY USIS PALERMO IN COOPERATION WITH THE ASSOCIAZIONE MUSICALE ETNA OF CATANIA, WAS SO ENTHUSIASTICALLY RECEIVED THAT THE DUO HAD THE STUDENTS SINGING AND CLAPPING THEIR HANDS; THE USIS PUBLIC AFFAIRS REPRESENTATIVE IN PALERMO NOTES SUCH AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION IN SICILY ALMOST UNHEARD OF. COMPLETE CONCERT BROADCAST BY PRIVATE RADIO STATION LATER SAME EVENING; LOCAL PRESS REVIEWS FULL OF PRAISE FOR VANAVER AND DRAPKIN.

5. COMING TOGETHER FESTIVAL WAS OBVIOUSLY A PROGRAM PLUS FOR SOUTHERN ITALY POSTS. HOWEVER, FOR THE FUTURE RECOMMEND CU/ARTS ADVISE POSTS OF ALL FACILITATIVE ASSISTANCE REQUIRED BY SUCH GROUPS, SINCE LAST-MINUTE NOTIFICATION OF EXTRA MICROPHONE, DRESSING ROOM, IRONING BOARD AND OTHER NEEDS CAN CAUSE DIFFICULTIES FOR SMALLER BRANCH AND SUB-POSTS. AMERSON

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